

REMARKS OF BENJAMIN MEED ON  
THE HOLOCAUST**HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 13, 1999*

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I would like to share with my colleagues the remarks of Mr. Benjamin Meed who recently gave an exceptionally moving speech about Yom Hashoah, The Days of Remembrance, at the United States Capitol. Mr. Meed is Chairman of both The Days of Remembrance Committee, United States Holocaust Memorial Council and the Warsaw Ghetto Resistance Organization (WAGRO). He is also the President of The American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors. Mr. Meed is a champion of humanitarian causes around the world.

REMARKS BY BENJAMIN MEED, CHAIRMAN,  
DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE COMMITTEE, UNITED  
STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL COUNCIL

REFUGEE DENIED: THE VOYAGE OF THE SS ST.  
LOUIS

Members of the diplomatic corps, distinguished members of the United States Senate and House of Representatives, members of the United States Holocaust Memorial Council, distinguished guests, fellow survivors and dear friends.

Welcome to our 20th national Days of Remembrance commemoration.

For at least a decade, the magnificent flags that surround us now have been part of our annual observance here in the nation's Capitol. Every time the American flag, and the flags of the United States Army Divisions that liberated the concentration camps, are brought into this Hall for this commemoration, a special pride as an American citizen sweeps over me, as I am sure it must for all Holocaust survivors. These pieces of red, white and blue cloth were the symbols of freedom and hope for those of us caught in the machinery of death. Discovery of the German Nazi concentration camps by the Allied armies began the process that restored our lives. Although we have many dates this month to remember, we recall with special gratitude the date of April 11, 1945, when American troops, in their march to end the war in Europe, came across the Buchenwald concentration camp. We will always remain grateful to the American soldiers for their bravery, kindness and generosity. We will always remember those young soldiers who sacrificed their lives to bring us liberty.

Many revelations over the last half a century have unveiled the Holocaust as a story of massive destruction and loss. It has been shown to be the story of an apathetic world—world full of callous dispassion and moral insensitivity, with few individual exceptions. But more, it has been shown to be a tale of victory—victory of the human spirit, of extraordinary courage and of remarkable endurance. It is the story of life that flourished before the Shoah, that struggled throughout its darkest hours, and that ultimately prevailed.

And after the Holocaust, as we rebuilt our lives, we also built a nation—the State of Israel. This was our answer to death and destruction—new life, both family and national life—and Remembrance. Minister Ben-David, please convey to the people of Israel our solidarity with them as they, too, Remember today on this Yom Hashoah.

Today, our thoughts turn back sixty years. On May 13, 1939, the SS St. Louis sailed from Hamburg bound for Havana with more than nine hundred passengers, most of them Jews

fleeing Nazism. For these passengers, it was a desperate bid for freedom that was doomed before it began. Politics, profit and public opinion were permitted to overshadow morality, compassion and common sense. It is so painful now to realize that not only Cuba but our own beloved country closed her doors and her heart to these People of the Book who could see the lights of Miami from the decks of the ship but were not allowed to disembark. This group of nine hundred could have been saved, but instead the voyage became a round-trip passage to hell for many of them. Less than three months after the St. Louis docked at Antwerp, the world was at war. And in less than three years, the "Final Solution of the Jewish Problem" in Europe was fully operational.

Could this happen today? Hopefully, not. But we—all of us—must be vigilant—ever mindful that once such a course of destruction of a people has been chartered, it can be followed again, and again, and again.

And what lessons did we derive from these horrible experiences? The most important lesson is obvious—it can happen again, the impossible is possible again. Ethnic cleansing, genocide, is happening as I speak. It can happen to any one or any group of people. The slaughter in Kosovo and in other places must be brought to an end.

Should there be another Holocaust, it may be on a cosmic scale. How can we prevent it? All of us must remain vigilant—always aware, always on guard against those who are determined to destroy innocent human life for no other reason than birthright.

There are some passengers of that unfortunate voyage of the SS St. Louis who are with us here today. Like most of us Holocaust survivors, they are in the winter of their lives. Even so, all of us look toward the future, because we believe that, in sharing our experiences—by bearing witness—there is hope of protecting other generations who might be abandoned and forgotten, robbed and murdered. The telling and retelling of the stories of the Holocaust with their profound lessons for humanity must become a mission for all humankind. In this way, future generations, particularly future generations of Americans, can Remember and can use the power of this knowledge to protect people everywhere.

In these great halls of Congress, we see symbols of the ideals that this country represents. It was the collective rejection of these ideals by many nations that made the Holocaust possible. Today, let us all promise to keep an ever-watchful eye for those who would deny the principles of liberty, equality and justice, and for those who would defy the rules of honorable and peaceful conduct between peoples, and nations. Together, let us remember. Thank you.

RECOGNIZING CATHERINE  
RODRIGUEZ

**HON. SCOTT McINNIS**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 13, 1999*

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to recognize the career of one of Colorado's leading ladies, and recipient of the Distinguished Service Award, Catherine Rodriguez. In doing so, I would like to honor this individual who, for many years, has exhibited dedication and experience to the court system of San Luis Valley.

As a District court reporter for the last 15 years, Ms. Rodriguez has been an active par-

ticipant and leader for the Colorado's court reporters. Before becoming its president in 1996–97, Catherine Rodriguez served on the Colorado Court Reporter's Association board for 7 years. She has proven to be valuable in creating a page-rate increase, as well as voicing Colorado's need for computer-integrated courtrooms.

Catherine Rodriguez has more than proven herself as a valuable asset to the court system of San Luis Valley, therefore, earning Colorado's highest honor for court reporters. This is a great achievement considering that she is only the second recipient in recent years.

It is with this, Mr. Speaker, that I say thank you to Catherine Rodriguez on a truly exceptional career as a Colorado court reporter. Due to Ms. Rodriguez's dedicated service, it is clear that Colorado is a better place.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF TEMPLE  
BETH TORAH

**HON. ROBERT A. BORSKI**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 13, 1999*

Mr. BORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the Temple Beth Torah. This synagogue serves the Jewish community in Northeast Philadelphia as well as the surrounding suburban neighborhoods of Montgomery and Bucks Counties.

Boulevard Temple was the original name of the synagogue when it was formed in 1949. In 1965, it was necessary to change the location of the temple in order to better serve the Jewish community. Since this expansion, the synagogue has been known as the Temple Beth Torah.

Temple Beth Torah enriches the community in many ways. Beyond meaningful and significant services, the synagogue has formed and manages a highly regarded School of Religion and an excellent Nursery School. In addition, the members of Temple Beth Torah improve their community through a wide array of events and activities. The Sisterhood, Men's Club and PTA strive to develop programs that will engage and educate congregants of all ages.

I wish to sincerely honor the Temple Beth Torah for its many accomplishments and offer my congratulations on the 50th anniversary. I hope the Temple continues to help the Jewish community prosper, flourish and benefit for many more years into the future.

CONGRATULING THE FAIR LAWN  
POLICE DEPARTMENT AND  
MCDONALD'S ON "A SAFE PLACE  
FOR SMALL FRIES"

**HON. MARGE ROUKEMA**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 13, 1999*

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Fair Lawn Police Department and

the McDonald's Corp. for a pioneering new program intended to help young children contact police in times of need. This program is extremely worthwhile and I am certain it will serve as a model that will be copied by many communities throughout our northern New Jersey region if not nationwide. Nothing in the world is more priceless than our children.

The Fair Lawn police and the local McDonald's restaurant this weekend will begin operation of a new project called "A Safe Place for Small Fries." Under this program, children who are lost, injured or otherwise in trouble can come to the restaurant and receive help in calling the police. The police department and McDonald's are circulating flyers advising the public of the new service, and McDonald's staff are being trained in how to respond to requests for help.

This program was the idea of Fair Lawn Police Officer Glen Callons. Officer Callons and his family were walking along a Jersey Shore boardwalk last Father's Day when they encountered an obviously lost 3-year-old girl. After his own young children approached the girl, the off-duty officer took the youngster to a nearby police substation, where she was reunited with her family.

Officer Callons couldn't stop thinking about the girl in the days that followed, worried that other small children might now know where to go if lost. It then struck him that almost all small children recognize the golden arches trademark of the ubiquitous McDonald's restaurant chain. Callons, assigned to the community policing division in Fair Lawn, approached the manager of the local McDonald's and began to develop plans for the program. The program is carefully structured, with children urged to dial 911 from a public phone if not close to the restaurant, and not to pass up a police station, fire station or hospital in order to reach the restaurant. A special training video has been prepared for McDonald's employees by police, and workers are supplied with multi-language information cards to help them deal with children who don't speak English.

McDonald's Corp. officials say they are looking at the program as a pilot. If successful, the company may enter similar arrangements with other police departments, potentially establishing a similar program nationwide. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children has supported the proposal, noting that the Boys and Girls Clubs of America have established similar "safe havens" at their clubhouses.

If this program can save even a single child from being lost or worse, then it is worthwhile. I am glad there are people like Officer Callons thinking pro-actively about the safety of our children in today's dangerous world. Officer Callons, Acting Chief of Police Rodman D. Marshall, and McDonald's Regional Marketing Coordinator Teresa Monohan deserve special recognition. I offer my support and wish this program success.

#### ASSAULT WEAPON BAN ENHANCEMENT ACT

**HON. JERROLD NADLER**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 13, 1999*

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, today I joined with several of my colleagues to introduce the

Assault Weapon Ban Enhancement Act of 1999. This legislature is designed to strengthen the existing ban and to respond to efforts by gun manufacturers and importers to cosmetically alter their weapons to avoid the ban.

I was a proud cosponsor of the Assault Weapon Ban Enhancement Act that passed in 1994, and I remain a strong supporter of that law. It specifically prohibited nine categories of pistols, rifles, and shotguns. It also had a "features test": that is, it bans semiautomatic weapons with multiple features (e.g., detachable magazines, flash suppressors, folding rifle stocks, and threaded barrels for attaching silencers) that appear useful in military and criminal applications, but that are unnecessary in shooting sports.

The Department of Justice recently released a report on the "Impacts of the 1994 Assault Weapons Ban: 1994-96." Among the report's key findings are that "criminal use of the banned guns declined, at least temporarily, after the law went into effect." It said that further studies were needed to assess the long-term effects. It also stated that "evidence suggests that the ban may have contributed to a reduction in the gun murder rate and murders of police officers by criminals armed with assault weapons."

But the report also observed that the ban could be easily avoided by gun manufacturers and importers. It said that "shortening a gun's barrel by a few millimeters or 'sporterizing' a rifle by removing its pistol grip and replacing it with a thumbhole in the stock, for example, was sufficient to transform a banned weapon into a legal substitute."

That is why we have to do more. We have witnessed, in gun shows and advertisements on the Internet and in magazines, a new brand of assault weapon, specifically designed to avoid the ban, but still lethal and potentially harmful to the American public. The BATF has recently approved a new weapon—the VEPR. We fear that gun makers will use the VEPR as a prototype of a new generation of weapons that seek to avoid the ban and flood the U.S. market with high-powered deadly assault rifles—assault rifles in fact; but evading the 1994 legal definition.

Our gun import laws are like a series of sieves. The first sieve is the 1989 ban on the importation of assault weapons, and the 1994 ban on the domestic manufacture of assault weapons. But there are some holes in this sieve. The second sieve—the Clinton Administration's April, 1998 ruling—has slightly smaller holes and blocks a few more weapons, including some guns that were cosmetically altered to avoid the first ban. The final sieve is the Nadler bill, which has the smallest holes. It stops guns that would have been determined to be assault weapons except for the fact that they had a thumb hole stock instead of a pistol grip. It stops guns that can be easily modified to accept high capacity magazines, or that use .22 caliber ammunition. Now, some guns will still make it through the Nadler sieve. Regular sporting rifles, and weapons that can't be modified to accept large capacity magazines would still be able to be imported. But the Nadler bill is designed to strengthen an already good law and to prevent manufacturers from evading the assault weapons ban.

This legislation was designed to head off the influx of this next generation weapon, before these guns are used in the next round of

deadly violence. This is a forward-looking bill, that will take strong preventive action now, so that we do not hear about another awful tragedy later. If we act quickly, we can do a world of good, and save countless lives.

#### A TRIBUTE TO COALINGA POLICE CHIEF LUELLA "KAY" HOLLOWAY

**HON. CALVIN M. DOOLEY**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 13, 1999*

Mr. DOOLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the induction of former Coalinga Police Chief, Luella "Kay" Holloway into the National Police Officer's memorial.

Chief Holloway's law enforcement career began when she was hired as a police matron and file clerk at the Torrance police Department in August 1963. In June 1964, she became a Los Angeles County Deputy Sheriff. The majority of her career was spent with the department until she relocated to the city of Coalinga as the Chief of Police.

Chief Holloway was the first woman Chief of Police in California history. At the time of her service in Coalinga, she was one of six female police chiefs in the country. During Chief Holloway's three and a half years in Coalinga, she was responsible for obtaining several important grants and initiating several new programs for the community.

On January 3, 1980, Chief Kay Holloway and her husband, California Highway patrol Officer Don Holloway, were killed in an airplane accident while returning home from a California P.O.S.T. training session in Sacramento. She died in the line of duty.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the induction of former Coalinga Police Chief Luella "Kay" Holloway into the National Peace Officer's memorial.

#### HONORING THE LENOX HILL DEMOCRATIC CLUB

**HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 13, 1999*

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to salute the Lenox Hill Democratic Club. This month, the Lenox Hill Club celebrates 44 years of service to the community. Founded as part of the reform movement in Democratic politics, the Lenox Hill Club has developed a reputation for championing progressive causes and candidates.

The Lenox Hill Democratic Club is composed of a concerned group of citizens eager to assist their neighbors. For the tenant, the elderly, or the women facing discrimination, the Lenox Hill Club is a place to turn for help.

In addition to working on behalf of the community, the members of the Lenox Hill Club have helped ensure the election of numerous progressive leaders. Located in the "silk-stockings district" on the East side of Manhattan, the Lenox Hill Club has been a source of strength for many of the most prominent leaders of our era, including Ed Koch, Mario Cuomo and Jimmy Carter.